

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 0388

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON, UR, NATO

SUBJECT: ECONADS: REPORT ON KOSYGIN'S TALK WITH AUSTRALIAN
PRIME MINISTER

CANADIAN ECONAD DISTRIBUTED TO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE ON JANUARY 23
FOLLOWING REPORT ON KOSYGIN'S REMARKS ON SOVIET ECONOMIC
POLICY DURING VISIT OF AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER TO MOSCOW.
BEGIN TEXT.

IN THE COURSE OF THE VISIT BY THE AUSTRALIAN
PRIME MINISTER, MR. KOSYGIN TALKED AT SOME LENGTH ON
SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF
ACCOUNT PROVIDED BY THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN MOSCOW:

KOSYGIN STRESSED THAT THE WHOLE COUNTRY WAS
UNITED BEHIND THE PARTY ON BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL
MATTERS. THEY WERE NOW WORKING ON A NEW FIVE YEAR PLAN
AND EXPECTED TO HVE IT FINISHED IN FOUR TO FIVE MONTHS.

KOSYGIN SAID THE MAJOR PROBLEM CONTINUED TO BE
AGRICULTURE, AND IT WOULD BE WITH THEM FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.
THERE WAS NO WAY OF COPING WITH PERIODIC PERIODS OF DROUGHT
BUT THEY WERE SPENDING A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY ON VARIOUS
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SCHEMES TO ALLEVIATE THE PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY DRAINAGE
AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS.

KOSYGIN SAID HOUSING WAS ALSO A MAJOR PROBLEM.

THEY WILL CONTINUE TO INVEST HUGE SUMS OF MONEY INTO HOUSING BUT BECAUSE OF THEIR FIRM POLICY OF KEEPING RENTS VERY LOW THIS MEANT ALL HOUSING WAS HEAVILY SUBSIDIAZED BY THE GOVERNMENT. THIS CREATES CONTINUAL PROBLEMS. BECAUSE OF RISING EXPECTATIONS ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE THERE WAS CONSTANT PRESSURE TO IMPROVE HOUSING STANDARDS BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE PEOPLE DID NOT WANT TO PAY HIGHER RENTS.

KOSYGIN SAID THE USSR WAS RESTRUCTURING SOME MINISTRIES TO BRING SCIENCE INTO MANAGEMENT AND TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE GROWING COMPLEXITY OF THE ECONOMY.

FINALLY, HE TALKED BRIEFLY ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF INFLATION IN THE WEST AND ITS EFFECT ON SOVIET CONTRACTS WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES. BUT HE ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO INFLATION IN THE USSR AND NEVER WOULD BE. END TEXT
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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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